

SELF-SERVICE CENTER
INSTRUCTIONS and PROCEDURES TO FILE A PETITION
FOR PRE-DECREE MEDIATION

STEP 1 Select the correct petition.

Use the “***Petition for Pre-Decree Mediation***” and “***Order***” if you are requesting Mediation by yourself, not jointly with the other party.

OR Use the “***Joint Petition for Mediation***,” if both parties want to go to mediation and both parties will sign the joint petition.

INSTRUCTIONS For Completing the “Petition”, and “Order”

STEP 1 Using black ink only, type or neatly print the information requested in the top, left-hand corner of the document, ***unless***:

- **The other party does not know your current address; AND**
- **You do not want the other party to know your current address; AND**
- **There is a current Order of Protection in force; AND**
- **You requested that your address be protected on that Order.**

If all of the above are true, write “**protected**” in the space where the Court asks for your contact information and tell the Clerk of the Court your address and phone number at the time of filing so the Court can get in touch with you.

NOTE: If you are a victim of domestic violence, and you do not want your address to be known to protect yourself or your children, **you must file a “*Petition for an Order of Protection*”** and ask that your address **not** be disclosed to avoid having to put your address and phone number on these or other court papers that will be given to the other party.

If your case has an ATLAS number, write it on the line provided. Check the box to indicate whether you are represented by an attorney. If so, complete the attorney information section.

Then, write in the case number in the space provided at the top right portion of the form. Your case number begins with “**D**”, “**DR**”, or “**FC**”, **and** is the file number of your divorce, paternity, or family court case.

Write in the name of the Judge currently assigned to your case.

STEP 2 Complete the caption of the case as it appears on the court papers previously filed in this case (If you are the Petitioner in your pre-existing case in this Court, you stay Petitioner. If you were the Respondent, you are the Respondent here also).

STEP 3 Fill in the “*Petition for Pre-Decree Mediation*” or the “*Joint Petition*”.

1. **Check the box** that tells the court whether you are getting divorced or seeking Paternity or “Other” such as Grandparent Visitation.
2. **Check the box** that tells the court whether you and the other party have been through mediation before in this case.
3. **Describe** the disagreement between you and the other party. Be brief. Be specific.
4. **Complete** the information about the other parent. You **must** be able to provide this information to request Mediation services through the Court.

5. Sign and date the “Petition for Mediation”.

STEP 4 Complete the “Order for Referral to Mediation.”

1. You must complete this Order along with your “*Petition for Pre-Decree Mediation*”.

STEP 5 Making copies/filing papers.

If filing the “Joint Petition for Pre-Decree Mediation”:

- Both parties sign the document.
- Make three copies.
- File the original and copies with Conciliation Services.

Conciliation Services will then send an Order to Appear for a scheduled mediation session.

STOP! If you are filing jointly, you are done. The instructions *below* do not apply if you are filing jointly.

If you are unable to get the notarized signature of the other party, use the “Motion for Pre-Decree Mediation”:

- Fill out the Petition.
- Make **three** copies of the “*Petition for Pre-Decree Mediation*”.
- Make **four** copies of the “*Order for Referral to Mediation*”.
- File the original “*Petition for Pre-Decree Mediation*” with the Clerk of the Court.

NOTE: There is currently NO FEE for filing this request, however if this is your first “appearance” in the case, that is, you are the respondent and you did not file a response and this is the first time you or your attorney have filed papers in the case, you will have to pay an Appearance Fee of \$191. You may request a deferral or waiver of the fee at the time you file your papers. The Self-Service Center and the Filing Counter have the waiver or deferral forms.

1. **Mail or Deliver** a copy of the “*Petition for Pre-Decree Mediation*” to the other party.
2. **Deliver to the Judge’s mailbox at Family Court Administration:**
 - one copy of the “*Petition for Pre-Decree Mediation*”, AND
 - the **original** and **four** copies of the “*Order for Referral to Mediation*”, AND
 - **Either:**
 - a) a “**Certificate of Service**” completed and signed by you, stating when and how you delivered a copy of your motion requesting Mediation to the other party and to their attorney (if they have one), OR
 - b) an “**Acceptance of Service**,” with the notarized signature of the other party stating they received their copy. Available from the Self Service Center or from the web at: <http://superiorcourt.maricopa.gov/ssc>
3. Give the Judge a Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope for each party who will receive a signed copy of the order to attend the mediation session.
4. Conciliation Services will then send an Order to Appear to both parties after receiving the signed Order from the judge.

CONCILIATION SERVICES ADDRESSES

Central Court Building

201 West Jefferson, 3rd floor
Phoenix, Arizona 85003

Southeast Court Complex

222 East Javelina Drive, 1st floor
Mesa, Arizona 85210

Northwest Court Complex

14264 West Tierra Buena Lane
Surprise, Arizona 85374

Northeast Court Complex

18380 North 40th Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85032

If mediation is scheduled, you and the other party will receive an ***“Order to Appear and Attend the Mediation”*** from the Conciliation Services Office.

Note: You must have a case in this Court involving the children who are the subject of this dispute to use the mediation services provided by the Court. If you do not, you may still benefit from the services of a private mediator. See below for additional information on private mediation / dispute resolution.

WARNING

You will have to pay a \$200 fee if you fail to attend a mediation session scheduled by the Court.

If you cannot attend, BOTH parties must notify conciliation services and receive permission to reschedule at least three (3) full Court days before the session.

If you reach full agreement on custody and parenting time issues and you do not plan to attend the Mediation, BOTH parties must notify Conciliation Services as soon as possible to avoid having to pay the \$200 fee!

PRIVATE Mediation/ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) providers are an additional option. Some offer evening or weekend hours or other conveniences. Some churches, or other religious or social service organizations may offer family counseling, arbitration or mediation services. You may also find additional providers listed in the Maricopa County Directory of Human Services and Self-Help Support Groups, available at public libraries or by phone at 602-263-8856.

You may also find private providers in the Yellow Pages under “Arbitration” and “Mediation.” Be aware that there are differences among private providers. While some are trained specialists, counselors, and attorneys, others are not. There are no licensing or minimal educational requirements to advertise as a mediator, arbitrator, or alternative dispute resolution provider.

The Court maintains a list of mediators that have met certain minimum requirements. You may view the lists at the Self-Service Centers or from our web site by clicking on the button to the right of “Lawyers and Mediators” at:

<http://www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov/ssc>

As with hiring any private business for service, we recommend asking friends and relatives for referrals. You are responsible for all costs involved in using private providers.